

As a librarian and resident of “Rural America” I can assure you that lowering the speed of broadband will not fix the connectivity problem this country faces, and will more than likely make it much worse in the long run. This idea is like putting a smaller gas tank in a car to lower exhaust emissions even though the driver still needs to go the same distance to work.

Many Americans...27%*... don’t even have broadband internet at home yet. (*see Pew research at: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2017/02/09/digital-divides-feeding-america/>), and here we are telling them that slower speeds and smaller data capacities are fine. While in truth digitization is increasing every day. More and more bandwidth is required for modern technologies and this does not even take into consideration what the future holds. 20 years ago, we were overtaxing the phone system with 54k modems now 54k bandwidth will not even load a single modern webpage. Please stop and think what bandwidth will be required in the next 20 years. Feel free to read “The Second Machine Age”, by Erik Brynjolfsson, and Andrew McAfee for a good look at what is coming in our future.

As a librarian, I can assure you that we are working hard every day to fill in the digital divide by providing access and education to those 27% of Americans that do not have access anywhere else. The needs these people face are real and growing as more and more essential services are shifted onto online only access methods. These citizens of “Rural America” are still American citizens and many will one day have no choice but to get home based internet just to survive daily life. So, I ask again please stop and consider how this reduction in bandwidth will affect their and all our futures.

Thank you.